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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000804

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR'S INSIGHTS ON POSSIBLE
RUNNING MATE CHOICE

REF: JAKARTA 779 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In a May 5 meeting with DepPol/C, Presidential Advisor T.B. Silalahi said President Yudhoyono is leaning toward choosing State Minister Hatta Rajasa as his vice-presidential running mate. The President still has not made his mind up, however (Yudhoyono has said he will announce his decision by May 10). Silalahi added that the President was continuing to work to maintain links with the Golkar Party despite his very public break with current VP Kalla, the Golkar Chair. He also offered some ideas on what the next Cabinet might look like if Yudhoyono indeed wins re-election in July. END SUMMARY.

STATE MINISTER AS RUNNING MATE CHOICE?

¶2. (C) Jakarta continues to be abuzz with rumors and reports about whom President Yudhohono might choose as his VP running mate for the July 8 election. According to Presidential Adviser T.B. Silalahi, Yudhoyono favors his loyal State Minister Hatta Rijasa for the spot. Silalahi told DepPol/C, "The decision is in his pocket but SBY could change his mind at any time." Yudhoyono compiled a list of all the possible candidates and rated them for loyalty, integrity, capability, public support, etc., Silalahi said. He crossed off all names except Hatta's who met "95% of the requirements." The President has announced that he will make public his decision by May 10.

¶3. (C) Yudhoyono believes Hatta is very loyal and honest, Silalahi remarked. With a degree in chemical engineering from a top Indonesian university, he served as Minister of Research and Technology under former president Megawati and is considered very capable. Hatta also hails from outside Java (Palembang, South Sumatra), thus providing a counterbalance to Yudhoyono's Javanese background. While Hatta is a member of another political party than the President's, he is not beholden to it. Because Hatta is affiliated with a major political party, he brings political support with him, however. His party, PAN (the National Mandate Party), has a large following among the country's 30 million Muhammadiyah members, the country's second largest Islamic movement, Silalahi commented.

¶4. (C) Hatta also has the support of Yudhoyono's closest and most trusted adviser, his wife Ani (see more below). "Madame Ani loves him, everyone loves him," Silalahi said. Another factor favoring the 56-year-old Hatta is that he does not appear to have ambitions to succeed Yudhoyono, and Yudhoyono would prefer to groom his own successor at the end of his second term in 2014 (if he indeed wins re-election).

15. (C) Other names are being bandied about. Per reftels, other informed sources have told us that respected economist Boediyono (one name), Chairman of the Bank of Indonesia (Central Bank) is a leading candidate. Another brilliant technocrat under consideration is Finance Minister Sri Mulyani. However, Silalahi said their lack of a political base of support is too large a liability. We have also heard of a number of other names, including Irman Gusman of Sumatra, who serves as the deputy of the upper house of parliament (DPD).

16. (C) Islamic-leaning notables are also an unlikely choice. Silalahi dismissed Hidayat Nur Wahid, a leader of the Islamic-oriented Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and his chances of getting the VP running mate nod. He said this would alienate Indonesia's non-Muslim and Chinese minorities, a small but very influential segment of Indonesian society. SBY is also worried about a possible PKS agenda to institute Shariah law, and what this would do to the fabric of Indonesia's pluralistic, secular society.

YUDHOYONO'S SPLIT WITH HIS VP

17. (C) Silalahi also commented on Yudhoyono's very public break with current VP Jusuf Kalla. It was at heart "a clash of cultures," Silalahi said--the humble, polite Yudhoyono from Java island versus the brash Kalla from Sulawesi island. Silalahi described Kalla's failed overtures to Yudhoyono to secure a promise that he would repeat as VP running mate. At the final meeting at which Kalla asked outright whether he would be on the ticket, Yudhoyono responded by asking Golkar (Kalla's party) to submit three names. Kalla felt humiliated

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and the next day Kalla announced he would run for President.

18. (C) Silalahi added that the relationship had been full of distrust. Kalla has taken hundreds of decisions without consulting SBY or even informing him afterwards. SBY takes a long time to make decisions so ministers went to Kalla for quick decisions, some good, some bad, but all without going through the chain of command.

19. (C) Also, the President's wife Ani Bambang Yudhoyono has always disliked Kalla for his direct style (some contacts assert that Kalla is additionally a business competitor with Ani's family, which is another reason to dislike him). Ani is very influential, making many of Yudhoyono's decisions, Silalahi said. Ani is one of the few advisors Yudhoyono totally trusts. She is extremely bright and engaging, he said. She also has pedigree of three generations of decorated military officers. She is an active supporter of many women's and children's organizations. Silalahi said Ani is among those who Yudhoyono and his inner circle are considering as presidential timber in 2014.

STILL TRYING TO WORK WITH GOLKAR

110. (C) The President is also trying to mend fences with elements of the influential Golkar Party. Yudhoyono is still seeking to restore the coalition with Golkar, Silalahi emphasized, but it is too late for Golkar to get the VP running mate slot even if Golkar rejects Kalla's move to break away from Yudhoyono. Besides, none of the Golkar candidates come close to meeting Yudhoyono's standards. Yudhoyono is fond of People's Welfare Minister Aburizal Bakrie, but the Lapindo mud volcano fiasco that his company caused in East Java carries too much political baggage. The Sultan of Yogyakarta is not at all popular outside Central Java, Silalahi said.

THE NEXT CABINET IF YUDHOYONO WINS

111. (C) Silalahi also speculated about the next Cabinet (assuming that Yudhoyono wins re-election). Asked whether it was Yudhoyono's desire to have fewer political and more

technocratic-type ministers, Silalahi said only to a certain extent was this even feasible. SBY has no choice but to let parties choose some Cabinet positions as part of coalition horse trading. He cannot tell other political party leaders who they can pick for posts. Parties are going to choose their most loyal members for Cabinet. He said about half the new Cabinet's posts would be awarded on merit, half on political patronage.

¶12. (C) Silalahi outlined what he said were Yudhoyono's priorities if elected to a second five-year term:

- Economic growth
- Good relations with other countries, particularly the U.S.
- Anti-corruption
- Fighting terrorism

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